

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 9, 2002

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Regula:

Thank you for your leadership on the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee.

Our purpose in writing is to support an increase in funding for the Health Resources and Services Administration's Health Professions Training for Diversity Programs in fiscal year 2003. These programs include the Minority Centers of Excellence, Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students, Health Careers Opportunity, and Loan Repayment and Faculty Fellowships programs.

As you know, the President's FY03 budget proposal eliminates virtually all funding for these important programs focused on improving the geographic distribution, quality, and ethnic diversity of the health care workforce. In addition to promoting diversity, these programs support the training of health professionals in fields experiencing shortages (i.e., pharmacy, dentistry, and allied health) and promote access to health care services in medically underserved communities.

A) Minority Centers of Excellence

The Minority Centers of Excellence program (COE) assists schools that train minority health professionals by supporting programs of excellence in health professions education at those institutions. The COE program focuses on improving student recruitment and performance; improving curricula and cultural competence of graduates; facilitating faculty/student research on minority health issues; and training students to provide health services to minority individuals by providing clinical teaching at community-based health facilities. *Fiscal year 2003 request: \$40 million (an increase of \$7.4 million over FY02)*

B) Health Careers Opportunity Program

Grants made to health professions schools and educational entities under the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) enhance the ability of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to improve their competitiveness to enter and graduate from health professions schools. HCOP funds activities that are designed to develop a more competitive applicant pool

The Honorable Ralph Regula
May 9, 2002
Page 2

through partnerships with institutions of higher education, school districts, and other community based entities. HCOP also provides support for mentoring, counseling, primary care exposure activities and information regarding careers in a primary care discipline. Students receive financial aid as well as preparatory assistance when entering into a health professions school. *Fiscal year 2003 request: \$40 million (an increase of \$5.2 million over FY02).*

C) Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students

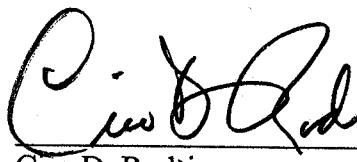
The Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students program was established to make scholarship funds available to eligible students from disadvantaged backgrounds who are enrolled (or accepted for enrollment) as full-time students. To be eligible for funding, a school must have in place a program to recruit and retain students from disadvantaged backgrounds (including racial and ethnic minorities) and demonstrate that the program has achieved success based on the number or percentage of disadvantaged students who graduate from the school. *Fiscal year 2003 request: \$52 million (an increase of \$5.8 million over FY02).*

D) Faculty Loan Repayment and Faculty Fellowships

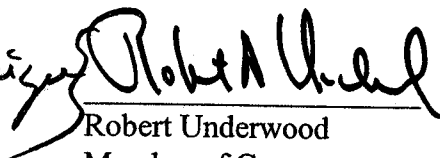
The Faculty Loan Repayment and Faculty Fellowship program is designed to assist health professions and nursing schools in increasing the number of under-represented minorities in faculty positions. Grant funds are made available on a matching basis for the school to identify, recruit, and select under-represented minority individuals who demonstrate potential in teaching, administration, or research at a health professions school. *Fiscal year 2003 request: \$3 million (an increase of \$1,670,000 over FY02).*

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. We look forward to working with you this year to ensure the continuation of congressional support for these critical programs.

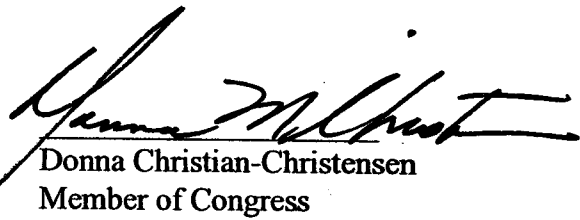
Sincerely,



Ciro D. Rodriguez
Member of Congress



Robert Underwood
Member of Congress

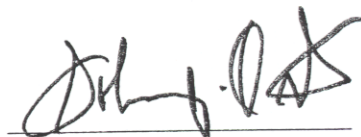


Donna Christian-Christensen
Member of Congress

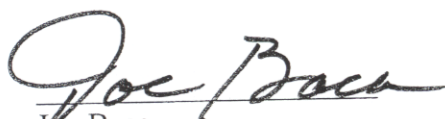
 

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

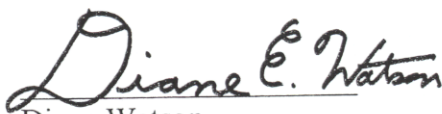
Ed Pastor
Member of Congress



Solomon Ortiz
Member of Congress



Joe Baca
Member of Congress



Diane Watson
Member of Congress



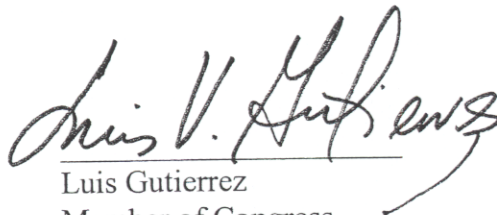
Xavier Becerra
Member of Congress



Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress



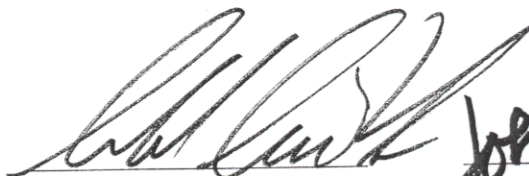
Chaka Fattah
Member of Congress



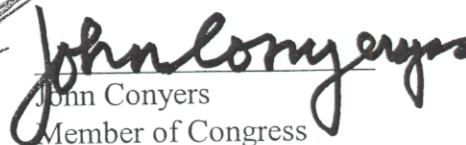
Luis Gutierrez
Member of Congress



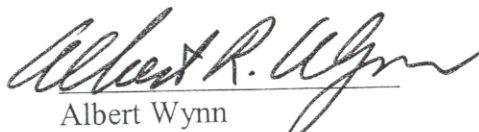
Mike Honda
Member of Congress



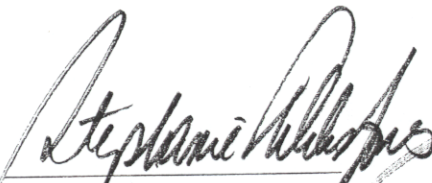
Anibal Acevedo-Vila
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John Conyers
Member of Congress



Albert Wynn
Member of Congress



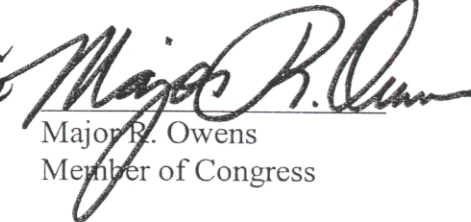
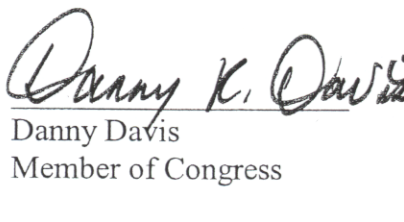
Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Member of Congress



Edolphus Towns
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Harold Ford
Member of Congress

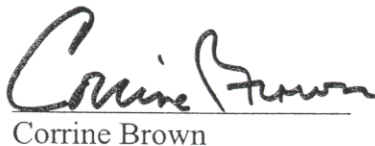


Danny Davis
Member of Congress

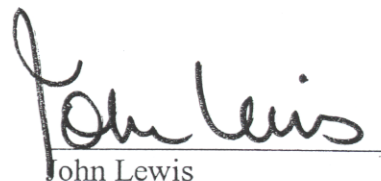
Major R. Owens
Member of Congress



Bennie Thompson
Member of Congress



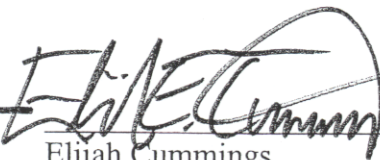
Corrine Brown
Member of Congress



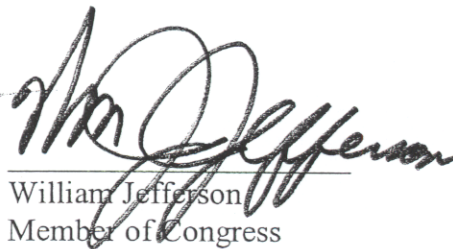
John Lewis
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



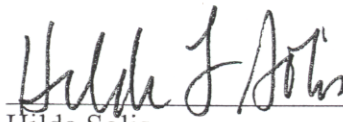
Elijah Cummings
Member of Congress



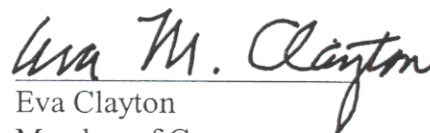
William Jefferson
Member of Congress



Donald Payne
Member of Congress



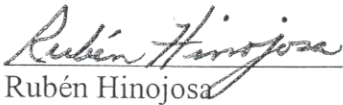
Hilda Solis
Member of Congress



Eva Clayton
Member of Congress



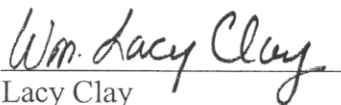
Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress



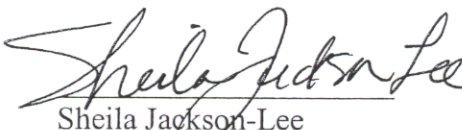
Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress



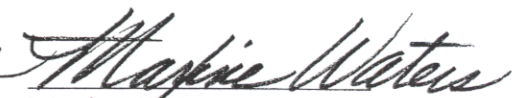
Charles Rangel
Member of Congress



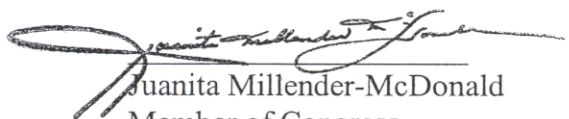
Lacy Clay
Member of Congress



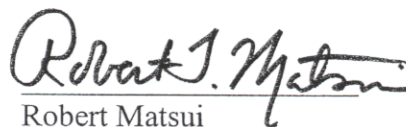
Sheila Jackson-Lee
Member of Congress



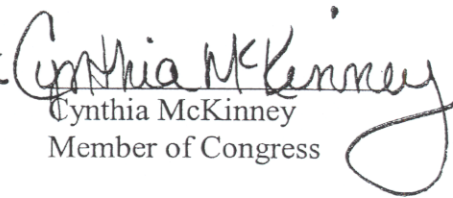
Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



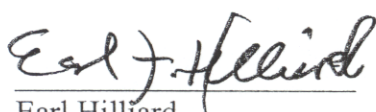
Juanita Millender-McDonald
Member of Congress



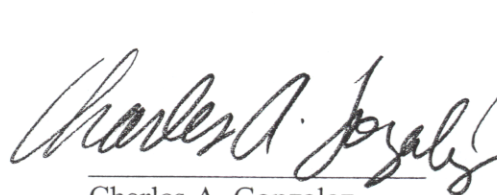
Robert Matsui
Member of Congress



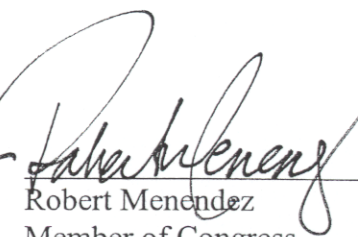
Cynthia McKinney
Member of Congress



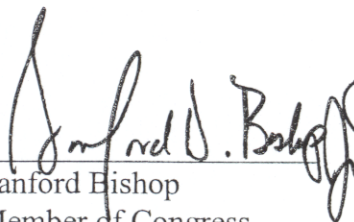
Earl Hilliard
Member of Congress



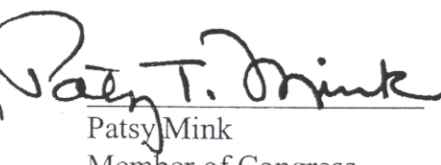
Charles A. Gonzalez
Member of Congress



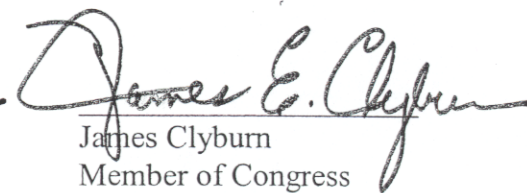
Robert Menendez
Member of Congress



Sanford Bishop
Member of Congress



Patsy Mink
Member of Congress



James Clyburn
Member of Congress